

## NIEHS team cleans local roadway for Earth Day

By Ian Thomas

NIEHS continued its weeklong celebration of Earth Day on April 21 by cleaning up the 1.2-mile stretch of Hopson Road between Davis Drive and N.C. Highway 55 in Research Triangle Park. The lunchtime cleanup was part of North Carolina's [Adopt-A-Highway Program](http://www.ncdot.gov/doh/operations/dp_chief_eng/roadside/beautification/highway/)

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, a long-standing effort to reduce litter on local roadsides and preserve the natural beauty of the Tar Heel State.

"NIEHS has a rich history with the Adopt-A-Highway Program, dating all the way back to the mid-1990s," said Paul Johnson, co-chair of the NIEHS Environmental Awareness Advisory Committee and an organizer of the cleanup team. "Not a lot of organizations hold that kind of legacy within their community, but it's fantastic to know that ours does."

Established in 1988 as a response to growing public concern about litter along the roadways, the Adopt-A-Highway Program currently hosts representatives from government and private sector entities across the state.

"It's always a treat to get out here on a sunny day and do my part to keep the Triangle beautiful," said NIEHS biologist Cindy Innes. "After all, isn't that what Earth Day is all about?"

Earth Day is an annual event, first celebrated on April 22, 1970, to demonstrate support for environmental protection. Now, Earth Day is globally recognized, and many organizations have expanded it to a full week.

(Ian Thomas is a public affairs specialist with the NIEHS Office of Communication and Public Liaison, and a regular contributor to the Environmental Factor.)



Mike Humble braved the outer guardrail to help clean up Hopson Road. (Photo courtesy of Steve McCaw)



Willis, left, and Steinmetz worked together to maximize their efforts. (Photo courtesy of Steve McCaw)



Popovich brings another load of trash to the pile. (Photo courtesy of Steve McCaw)



The Adopt-A-Highway Program is managed by the N.C. Department of Transportation. (Photo courtesy of Steve McCaw)



From left, Steinmetz, Popovich, Maggie Humble, Mike Humble, Hall, Johnson, and Willis displayed the results of their labor. Innes and Shropshire, not shown, also participated in the cleanup effort. (Photo courtesy of Steve McCaw)

### **2015 NIEHS Adopt-A-Highway participants**

Laura Hall — National Toxicology Program, Program Operations Branch  
Maggie Humble — Division of Intramural Research (DIR) Genomic Integrity and Structural Biology Laboratory  
Mike Humble, Ph.D. — Division of Extramural Research and Training (DERT) Genes, Environment, and Health Branch  
Cindy Innes — DIR Clinical Research Branch  
Paul Johnson — NIEHS Health and Safety Branch  
Nicole Popovich — DERT Office of the Director  
VeeVee Shropshire — NIEHS Health and Safety Branch  
Bill Steinmetz — NIEHS Health and Safety Branch  
Bill Willis — DIR Laboratory of Reproductive and Developmental Toxicology

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